IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A network for distributing information, between a central unit and stations, comprising information splitting devices with inputs/outputs connected ~~on the one hand~~ to the central unit and ~~on the other hand~~ to the stations, an interface device in each station, ~~characterized in that~~

wherein the interface device of each station is linked to a first splitting device and to a second splitting device,[[.]] and

wherein protocol exchanges between the central unit and the interface device are organized such that the central unit can determine whether a terminal is faulty, an interface is faulty, or the splitting device is faulty.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that several~~ wherein plural interface devices are mounted in cascade on a link starting from a splitting device.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein an interface device comprises a means for detecting a fault relating to a problem on a link between this interface device and the first or the second splitting device.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the means for detecting faults comprises means for mutual acknowledgement with the central unit.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising a device for switching over from the first splitting device to the second splitting device.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the switching device is in the central unit.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a link between a splitting device and an interface device is effected with a cable having two twisted conductors.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a splitting device is linked by a link connected to one of its inputs/outputs to a single special interface device, this special interface device being linked by another link connected to another input/output of another splitting device.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each splitting device is capable of supporting a bit rate greater than a nominal bit rate.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The network as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein addresses used to identify elements of the network comprise fields of which a first field makes it possible to identify a group of stations connected to a splitting device identified by a second field and that a modification of a value of the second field makes it possible to connect ~~a~~ the group of stations to another splitting device.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A process for splitting the effects of a fault in a network for distributing information among terminals, wherein

~~characterized in that~~

[[-]] N splitting devices are linked, according to a star topology, to a central unit with the aid of transport means over each of which a primary stream travels, to a splitting device of rank m there corresponds a primary stream FP_m,

[[-]] the splitting devices are furnished with first inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i and with second inputs/outputs B_1 to B_j,

[[-]] the first inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i of a splitting device K are linked by buses K_1 to K_i to the second inputs/outputs B_1 to B_i of a consecutive splitting device K + 1, with $1 \leq K \leq N$,

[[-]] terminals are linked in cascade to each bus K_1 to K_i,

[[-]] the first inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i of the splitting devices 1 to N are activated,

[[-]] upon a fault between a terminal linked by a splitting device K to the central unit, a first input/output A_1 to A_i of the splitting device K is deactivated,

[[-]] a second input/output B_1 to B_i of the splitting device K + 1 is activated.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein

~~characterized in that~~

[[-]] upon an event relating to the splitting device K, the first inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i of the splitting devices K + 1 to N are deactivated,

[[-]] the second inputs/outputs B_1 to B_i of the splitting devices K + 1 to N are activated.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein ~~characterized in that~~

[[-]] upon a fault, some of the first inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i of the splitting device K + 1 are activated.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein ~~characterized in that~~

[[-]] upon another event relating to a splitting device K ± n, a number of first inputs/outputs and a number of second inputs/outputs to be activated for each of a number of devices available between the splitting devices K and K ± n are determined as a function of these available devices, this number being different by one unit at most between two available devices,

[[-]] inputs/outputs thus determined from among the inputs/outputs A_1 to A_i and or B_1 to B_i are activated.

Claim 15 (New): A network for distributing information, between a central unit and stations, comprising information splitting devices with inputs/outputs connected to the central unit and to the stations, an interface device in each station,

wherein the interface device of each station is linked to a first splitting device and to a second splitting device, and

wherein plural interface devices are mounted in cascade on a link starting from a splitting device.

Claim 16 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, wherein an interface device comprises a means for detecting a fault relating to a problem on a link between this interface device and the first or the second splitting device.

Claim 17 (New): The network as claimed in claim 16, wherein the means for detecting faults comprises means for mutual acknowledgement with the central unit.

Claim 18 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a device for switching over from the first splitting device to the second splitting device.

Claim 19 (New): The network as claimed in claim 18, wherein the switching device is in the central unit.

Claim 20 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, wherein a link between a splitting device and an interface device is effected with a cable having two twisted conductors.

Claim 21 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, wherein a splitting device is linked by a link connected to one of its inputs/outputs to a single special interface device, this special interface device being linked by another link connected to another input/output of another splitting device.

Claim 22 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, wherein each splitting device is capable of supporting a bit rate greater than a nominal bit rate.

Claim 23 (New): The network as claimed in claim 15, wherein addresses used to identify elements of the network comprise fields of which a first field makes it possible to identify a group of stations connected to a splitting device identified by a second field and that a modification of a value of the second field makes it possible to connect a group of stations to another splitting device.